

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled claims 8, 13, 14, 18 and 21. Thus, claims 1-7, 9-12, 15-17, 19, 20 and 22 are now pending in the application. In response to the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

Claims 1, 6-8 and 10-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Katakura (U.S. Patent No. 5,953,500) in view of Ohara (U.S. Patent No. 4,789,782). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katakura in view of Yamada (U.S. Patent No. 6,099,804). Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katakura in view of Ohara and Lash (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0020229). Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katakura in view of Yoshida (U.S. Patent No. 5,982,504). Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katakura in view of Barry et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,657,741). Applicant respectfully traverses the prior art rejections.

Independent Claims 1, 2 and 11

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 2 and 11 to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claims 8, 13, and 14. In particular, claims 1 and 2 now require:

data transmission source identifying means for identifying a transmission source of data transmitted from the data processors, wherein the data transmission source identifying means supports a plurality of communication protocols and executes different types of processes for identifying the transmission source based on the communication protocol used to transmit the data from the plurality of data processors. (emphasis added).

Similarly, claim 11 now requires:

uniquely identifying one of the data processors as a data transmission source of data received by the image output processor according to a communication protocol utilized to transmit the data, wherein the data processors transmit the data to the image output processor using a plurality of different communication protocols. (emphasis added).

Applicant respectfully submits that it is quite clear that Katakura, Ohara and Yamada, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter of canceled claims 8, 13 and 14 which has been added to claims 1, 2 and 11. In particular, the cited references do not disclose data transmission source identifying means which supports a plurality of communication protocols and executes different types of processes for identifying the transmission source based on the communication protocol used to transmit the data from the plurality of data processors (or uniquely identifying one of the data processors as a data transmission source of data received by the image output processor according to a communication protocol utilized to transmit the data, wherein the data processors transmit the data to the image output processor using a plurality of different communication protocols). Although the Examiner cites Katakura at column 3, lines 53-67 and column 4, lines 1-6 in support of the rejections of canceled claims 8, 13 and 14, the sections of Katakura cited by the Examiner are not relevant to the subject matter of these claims.

Similarly, the Examiner's statement that "Katakura discloses the sorting image signal represents information on the object modality and the like" does not address the subject matter of claims 8, 13 and 14 which has been incorporated in claims 1, 2 and 11.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2 and 11, as well as dependent claims 3, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12-16, should be allowable because the combined references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims.

Independent Claim 4

With regard to the pending rejection of claim 4, the Examiner states:

Yoshida discloses in column 3, lines 66-67 and column 4, lines 1-17 that signals 1-5 correspond to select output bins. These signals are detected from the incoming calls to the fax device. The incoming calls are usually routed through different communication channels [until] received by the fax device. Since applicant does not claim any specific communication protocol for medical imaging, examiner considers the protocol used by the fax machine in connection with a telephone line satisfies the claim language.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify Katakura based on the teachings of Yoshida to identify the source of data transmission by determining the communication channel used to transmit the data from the plurality of data processors, and determine which sorter bin to output data received from the plurality of data processors based on the identified communication channel, as claimed. Although Yoshida teaches that calling signals from non-speech terminals may have different pulse width patterns (see Figs. 8A-8E) representing different numbers (1-5) and sorter bins of the facsimile apparatus are selected according to a detected number of a calling signal, the cited

reference does not disclose that the different numbers of the calling signals correspond in any manner to different channels through which the calling signals are transmitted to the facsimile apparatus. Instead, Yoshida simply teaches that the calling signals are received via a common telephone line (2a) connected to the facsimile apparatus, and the different numbers of the calling signals may be utilized to designate different intended recipients of a call and/or different processing operations to be performed by the facsimile apparatus.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that it is quite clear that Yoshida does not provide any teachings which would motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Katakura to produce the invention of claim 4. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4 and 5 should be allowable over the combined references.

Independent Claims 17 and 20

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 17 and 20 to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claims 18 and 21. In particular, claims 17 and 20 now require that the attribute data or the particular data processor is identified according to a communication protocol utilized to transmit the image data, and the data processors transmit the image data to the image output processor using a plurality of different communication protocols. For the same reasons discussed above with regard to claims 1, 2 and 11, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 17 and 20, as well as dependent claims 19 and 22, should be allowable over the combined references.

Claims 15 and 16

By this Amendment, Applicant has rewritten claims 15 and 16 in independent form and amended the claim language to improve clarity. Claims 15 and 16 require uniquely identifying one of the data processors as the data transmission source of the data received by the image output processor by extracting originating device data from tag data transmitted prior to the image data received by the image output processor. Applicant respectfully submits that the combined references do not teach or suggest this feature of the claimed invention. Instead, Katakura teaches transmitting the sorting information signal together with the image signal to the printer and Ohara teaches transmitting data representing the number of the device when the image signals are transferred to the image recording apparatus.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 15 and 16 should be allowable over the Katakura and Ohara because the combined references do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Patent Application No. 09/640,687

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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